MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please now sit down. What else can be the hon. Minister say?

[Translation]

He is saying that this matter pertains to the Ministry of Defence. Gupta ji do you want to say anything.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : I was not Home Minister two years back.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now you are.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I will have to ascertain the facts about the matter raised here only then I will give a statement...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Hon. Minister of Home Affairs has said that he will give a statement. Now you please resume your seat.

[English]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh) : I rise to make an appeal to you and to the entire House. On 3rd December, 1971, *i.e.*, 25 years ago, at about 5.30 in the evening, began an event which subsequently resulted, not only just in the emergence of an independent sovereign State of Bangladesh, but it is also to my mind and I am sure to those who recollect an event, a very noteworthy and glorious chapter of the army in independent India's history. Today is the 25th anniversary of that event. I refer to the 1971 War. A great many Indian gave up their lives both in the Eastern and the Western sectors. About 90,000 Pakistanis remained prisoners on Indian soil for many months. It resulted in the Shimla Agreement. That is not the history into which I wish to go now. I wish to appeal to you and to the entire House that if this great feat of the Army of Independent India goes unsung on its 25th anniversary, it would be an act of omission certainly by this House. It is, therefore, my appeal to you, in whatever fashion you find fit, that we certainly remember today the heroes of 1971, those who gave up their lives and those that are living. It is only an appeal that I make to you. It is up to you to decide how it is to be done. It is up to you to decide then how it is to be done...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJESH PILOT (Dausa) : Sir, that day, the Government agreed that the Prime Minister would write to all the Chief Ministers to hold a get-together of all the people, who had taken part in the War or the ex-Servicemen, at the District Headquarters. If you recall, you were in the Chair and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan was here. The Prime Minister came a bit late. But when he called me there personally, he said that he would write a letter to all the Chief Ministers requesting or asking them to hold a reception at the District Headquarters so that the ex-Servicemen could come and have a cup of tea with the District Administration. They would do this in remembrance of those people who laid down their lives for the nation. Now, the hon. Minister is here. He can say whether the Prime Minister has done that or not. He can confirm that...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I made a request to the hon. Speaker about the matter raised by Jaswant Singh ji yesterday and had said that if he makes a mention about this incident at the outset of the meeting of the House that how our brave soldiers made sacrifices to give their contribution in the freedom struggle of their neighbouring country, it would be a tribute to those mrtyrs and our Jawans. Will get encouragement also. I am not aware as to what happened to that but a mention in this regard must be made in the House and the whole House should support that...*(Interruptions)* you can do that.

SHRIMATI SHUSHMA SWARAJ (South Delhi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, 16th December is the victory Day.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : There was anti-Indianism also. Let us remind ourselves that the United States was trying to obstruct our attempts to help Bangladesh. Additionally, I think we should also celebrate the 25th Year of Independence of Bangladesh from the rule of Pakistan. We should add this to that.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SHUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the war should on 3rd of that month and 16th was celebrated as Victory Day. This Government has totally forgotten those national heroes. A programme should be chalked out to honour those heros on 16th December...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Rajesh Pilot ji had raised this issue but the hon. Prime Minister was not present here. When he came I apprised him about the matter raised. He called Rajesh Pilot and assured him about this. Hon. Prime Minister is expected here and I will bring this into his knowledge...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SHUSHMA SWARAJ : What you have done upto now?

[English]

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Today, the Chief Ministers' Conference is being held. All the Chief Ministers of all the States are available in Delhi. I think the hon. Minister can take it up with the Chief Ministers. They will do it eagerly. Everyone respects them. It is only a question of initiative either on the part of the Central Government or the Home Minister.

[Translation]

PROF. RITA VERMA : Hon. Prime Minister always forgets the assurance given by him...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : On behalf of the Central Government, I would like to say that today, the Chief Ministers' conference is being held. We will definitely appeal to them.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I would also like this.

(Interruptions)

SHRI I.D. SWAMI (Karnal) : The letter has not been given to the hon. Minister because as per our knowledge this information is not available in any disrict of Haryana ....*(Interruptions)*

LT. GENERAL (RTD. SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI (Deoria) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I took part in the 1971 war in Bangladesh in which 92,000 Pakistani soldiers were made prisioners of war and were brought to India. Bangladesh was freed in just 13 days and it was a historical event. Therefore, a grand function should be organised on 16th or 17th, as may be deemed fit to commemorate that occasion so that message should go to the people of India that we are with those brave soldiers who brought laurels to the country. It will boost the morale of the people of our country. We are representing the whole country here. Every citizen of the country should be associated with this hostorical event.

[English]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal) : I also had the privilege of defending my motherland in 1971, so did my colleague Shri Rajesh Pilot. Field Marshal Cariappa, the first Commander-in-Chief had said: "In times of war, we remember God and the soldier. When war is over, God is forgotten and the soldier forsaken." This is also going to be the fiftieth year of Major Somnath Sharma who got the first PVC of independent India. So the Government should take it seriously and honour those who have laid down their lives as well as those who fought for the motherland.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I also remember one small incident. It was the occassion of Holi festival after 1971 war. I went to see some injured soldiers at Ambala Hospital, who were admitted there. Some packets were being given to the Jawans. I asked to one Jawan that on which part of body he had received injury. He replied in a very harsh manner that he had not received any injury. After much persuation he asked me to lift the quilt under which he was covered. I saw that his both the legs were missing. But he said that he did not feel sorry for losing his legs. He was proud of that his legs were cut in the war in which Shakkargarh area was won, which is near Jammu. But after some days the whole area was given to Pakistan. I was compelled to think that what that brave Soldier would have felt about that who said that his sacrifice had not gone waste and Shakkargarh was with India.

I would like to appeal to you that keeping in view the sentiments of the House a committee of BAC may be constituted which should decide about organising an appropriate function in the Central Hall or here in commemoration of those mrtyrs who have shed their blood for the country or something must be done in this regard.

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA (Outer Delhi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the tragic incident took place at Ambala yesterday morning. At about 2 'o' Clock or 2.30 a.m. Jhelum Express which was about to start for Jammu from Ambala, suddenly bomb explosions took place. The Government sources have stated that 12 people have died and 30 have got injuries. But according to our sources the number of people dies is 25 and more than 50 have got injured. RDX has been used for the explosion. This is a very serious matter and the Government should come forward to give a statement in the House.

[English]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I have already given notice to the hon. Speaker at 10 in the morning that I will make a statement today in the House.

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : I welcome that and this should come into our notice. But I would like to bring this to your notice that two incidents have occurred today. An Ex-MLA has been murdered in Punjab and bomb explosion has taken place at Ambala. These incidents in Punjab indicate that the same atmosphere of terrorism is being tried to be created in Punjab. A conspiracy is being hatched. I would like to know as to whether it is in the notice of the Government and inquiry is being conducted by it or Government is going to make a statement in this regard. The second thing is that compensation should be provided to the people who have been injured in this explosion. The Government should came out with a statement in this regard on and inform the House about the reasons or whether there is any apprehension of sabotage.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a very serious incident and the whole House should be concerned